REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated December 8, 2008. Claims 1 and 2 are currently in the application, with Claim 1 being the sole independent claim. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Publication No. 2002-332825 ("Yajima") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,974,789 ("Mathes"). Applicant has carefully reviewed the applied references and respectfully traverses the rejection for the following reasons.

The exhaust gas purification apparatus recited in claim 1 includes a pressure reducing device that is switchable either to let compressed air from an air reservoir tank pass through directly or to reduce the pressure of the compressed air from the air reservoir tank to a predetermined pressure as it passes through. The pressure reducing device allows both high pressure compressed air and compressed air at the predetermined pressure to be supplied from a common air reservoir tank. Accordingly, the exhaust gas purification apparatus can be implemented with fewer valves and air tanks than required in conventional designs. *See* pg. 10, line 23, to pg. 11, line 5, of the subject application.

The Office Action conceded that Yajima does not disclose a pressure reducing device as specified in claim 1. To remedy this deficiency, the Office Action applied Mathes in combination with Yajima. In particular, the Office Action contended that the pressure controller 50 described in Mathes corresponds to the pressure reducing device of claim 1 in the subject application. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

As discussed in col. 5, lines 43-60, in Mathes, pressure controller 50 permits autonomous control of the pressure of the compressed air provided to the spraying device 22. However, the operation of pressure controller 50 is not understood to be the same as the pressure reducing device of claim 1. Pressure controller 50 is seen to be a device, such as a spring-loaded valve, that feeds excess air pressure to a blow-off line 51. Pressure controller 50 is not seen to be switchable to provide compressed air to the spraying device 22 either directly at a high pressure or at a reduced predetermined pressure. Rather, the pressure controller 50 is seen to simply maintain the pressure of the air passed to spraying device 22 at a constant pressure by feeding excess air pressure to blow-off line 51.

Nothing in either Yajima or Mathes is seen to disclose or suggest the features of independent claim 1. Specifically, neither of these references, either alone or in combination, are seen to disclose a pressure reducing device that is switchable either to let compressed air from an air reservoir tank pass through directly or to reduce the pressure of the compressed air from the air reservoir tank to a predetermined pressure as it passes through. Therefore, independent claim 1 is believed to be allowable over the applied references. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 103(a) rejection of independent claim 1 are respectfully requested.

Claim 2 is dependent from claim 1 discussed above and therefore is believed to be allowable over the applied references for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of claim 2 is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 502203 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

McDERMOTT WILL & EMERY LLP

Andrew D. Mickelsen
Registration No. 50,957

18191 Von Karman Ave., Suite 500
lrvine, CA 92612-7108
Phone: 949.851.0633 ADM:gmb
Facsimile: 949.851.9348
Date: March 9, 2009

Please recognize our Customer No. 31824 as our correspondence address.

ORC 445433-1.050203.0140